

REMARKS

As now amended, claim 1 specifies that the end tab 20 is releasably wedged in the receiving channel 36. Claim 8 is similarly limited, and claim 9 calls for downwardly sloping surfaces configured to frictionally retain the end tab in the receiving channel.

For at least these reasons, claims 1, 8, and 9 are patentably distinguishable from the cited references. For example, in Dillon, the recess F has a counterbore H at one end and a bight N at the other end. It will be seen from the Dillon specification at lines 57-62 that it is the bight N that serves to prevent the cord E from slipping and it is the bight N that prevents the knot M from slipping out of the counterbore M. The knot M is not wedged in the recess F, nor is it frictionally retained in the recess by jamming surfaces.

The Scholey reference is even less pertinent. In Scholey, the strap 20 is elastic, and when under tension, serves to hold the wing portions 22 of buckle member 18 in abutting engagement with the flanges 24 of buckle member 16. Contrary to the examiner's assertion, there are no surfaces on the undersides of the flanges 24 that serve to wedge or frictionally engage the wing portions 22. Stated another way, if the strap 20 were not elastic and stretchable to hold the wing portions 20 against the flanges 24, the Scholey buckle simply would not hold.

In summary, therefore, neither Dillon nor Scholey anticipates or renders obvious applicant's invention as now defined by the pending claims. Reconsideration and allowance is now believed to be in order.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maurice E. Gauthier", written over a horizontal line.

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